THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) No.

(b) Despite such assurances on several occasions, Pakistan countinues to support cross border infiltration and maintain the infrastructure of support to terrorism.

(c) and (d) India's position has been consistent. Under Simla agreement and as reiterated in the Lahore declaration, both India and Pakistan are committed to addressing bilateral issues through peaceful bilateral dialogue. There is no scope for any third party role or mediation.

(e) According to information available, between September 2001 and September 2004, the US direct bilateral assistance would be about US$ 2 billion, including US$ 375 million military aid through Foreign Military Financing.

(f) India has drawn attention to the negative impact of the economic and military assistance provided by US to Pakistan on the long term anti-terrorism efforts, democratization process in Pakistan, and Pakistan's approach to relations with India.

Base camps of insurgent groups in Myanmar

468. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of insurgent groups operating in different north-eastern States are having their base camps at Myanmar;

(b) whether Myanmar Government has been approached not to give shelter to these insurgent outfits in Myanmar; and

(c) if so, what has been the response from Myanmar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Reports have appeared from time to time indicating presence of some Indian Insurgent Groups in the area along the Indo-Myanmar Border.

(b) India is maintaining a continuous dialogue with Myanmar on Security Cooperation through diplomatic channels and institutional mechanisms. These include National Level Meetings (NLM) and Sectoral

Level Meetings (SLM), held annually with the participation of representatives of MHA, MOD and the State Governments of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. In addition, Foreign Office consultations and Border Liaison Meeting (BLM) between the Area Commanders of the Army of the two countries are held regularly.

(c) Myanmar Army has carried out periodic combing operations against Indian Insurgent Groups trying to operate from Myanmar territory. Myanmar has repeatedly assured that it will not allow elements hostile to India to operate from its territory and will cooperte with India to ensure that the common border remains peaceful and prosperus.

USA's request for troops to Iraq

469. SHRI N.R. DASARI:
SHRI MURLI DEORA:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether USA has requested India for making available troops for Iraq;

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government thereon; and

(c) the Countries which are sending their troops to Iraq to stabilise post-war effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) The decision taken by Government of India on July 14, is as follows.

"The Government of India has given careful thought to the question of sending Indian troops to Iraq.

Our longer term national interest, our concern for the people of Iraq, our long-standing ties with the Gulf region as a whole, as well as our growing dialogue and strengthened ties with the U.S. have been key elements in this consideration.